

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /056 W
-----210725Z 124023 /17
R 200802Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0697

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FOLG SENT ACTION NEW DELHI INFO CALCUTTA MADRAS RPTD FOR
YOUR INFO.

QUOTE.

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EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT IN
SUBJ: CURRENT GOAN POLITICAL ACTIVITY

1. THE REGULAR TERM OF THE GOA LEGISLATURE EXPIRES ON MARCH 23,

1977. THE PRESENT LEGISLATURE OF THE UNION TERRITORY OF GOA WAS
ELECTED IN MARCH 1972 FOR FIVE YEARS. SINCE THE RECENT AMENDMENT
IN THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION, EXTENDING THE TERM OF THE STATELEGI-
SLATURE FROM FIVE TO SIX YEARS, DOES NOT APPLY TO UNION TERRI-
TORIES, THE FUTURE OF THE CURRENT GOA LEGISLATURE IS UNCERTAIN.
THE CENTER HAS TWO OPTIONS: EXTEND THE TERM OR PROPOSE PRESIDENT'S
RULE. (WE DISCOUNT SEPARATE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS AS POLITICALLY
UNACCEPTABLE TO NEW DELHI.)

2. THE RULING MAHARASHTRA WADI GOOANTAK PARTY (MGP) POSITION IS
THAT THE UNION TERRITORIES ACT PROVIDES FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE
TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE FOR ONE YEAR BY PRESIDENTIAL DECREE UNDER
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THE STATE OF EMERGENCY. ON THE OTHER HAND THE OPPOSITION PARTY
(CONGRESS-R) OPPOSES SUCH EXTENSION. IT WANTS IMMEDIATE IMPOSITION
OF PRESIDENT'S RULE IN GOA, CLAIMING ALLEGED FAILURE OF THE MGP
ADMINISTRATION TO CONTROL THE LAW AND ORDER SITUATION AND CURB
CORRUPTION.

3. NOT SURPRISINGLY BOTH PARTIES ARE PRESSING THEIR RESPECTIVE

VIEW POINTS IN NEW DELHI. GOA CHIEF MINISTER MRS KAKODKAR, WHO IS ALSO THE PRESIDENT OF THE RULING MGP, WILL MEET MRS GANDHI ON JAN 18 TO PLEAD THE MGP CASE FOR THE EXTENSION OF THE LEGISLATURE. EARLIER THIS MONTH A THREE MEMBER GOA CONGRESS-R DELEGATION LED BY ITS LEGISLATIVE LEADER A.N.NAIK, CALLED ON THE HIGH COMMAND TO OPPOSE THE EXTENSION. GOA CONGRESS PRESIDENT MRS KATKAR AND GOA CONGRESS-R MP MR KAKODKAR ARE EXPECTED TO MEET WITH THE HIGH COMMAND TO REITERATE THE DEMAND FOR IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENT'S RULE.

4. BOTH PARTIES ALSO AGREE ON ONE THING; STATEHOOD. THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY RECENTLY UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR GOAN STATEHOOD.

COMMENT

5. THERE ARE POLITICAL PROS AND CONS TO EITHER OF THE TWO SOLUTIONS. EXTENSION OF THE TERRITORIAL LEGISLATURE FOR ONE YEAR PUTS THE WHOLE POLITICAL PROBLEM ON THE BACK BURNER FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. ON THE OTHER HAND IT DOES LEAVE THE OPPOSITION PARTY CONTROLLING A POLITICAL ENTITY LARGER THAN A MUNICIPALITY, A SITUATION WHICH NOW EXISTS ELSEWHERE ONLY IN KASHMIR. PRESIDENTIAL RULE WOULD PROVIDE A PERIOD DURING WHICH THE GOA CONGRESS PARTY COULD STRENGTHEN ITS POSITION, PARTICULARLY IF DURING THIS PERIOD SOME OF THE MANY CHARGES OF CORRUPTION AGAINST THE KAKODKAR ADMINISTRATION WERE PROVEN. PRESUMABLY PRESIDENTIAL RULE WOULD BE LENGTHY SINCE CONGRESS-R NEEDS CONSIDERABLE TIME AND EFFORT TO MOVE FROM A MINORITY OF EIGHT TO THE NEEDED MAJORITY OF AT LEAST 16. IMPOSITION OF PRESIDENTIAL RULE WOULD PROBABLY LEAD TO ANOTHER SPATE OF CRITICISM IN THE FOREIGN PRESS, WHICH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESUMABLY THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD PREFER TO AVOID.

6. THE QUESTION OF STATEHOOD HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN LINKED IN GOA TO THE QUESTION OF CONGRESS-R POLITICAL BASE. IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED IN BOMBAY THAT STATEHOOD HAS NOT BEEN GRANTED BECAUSE THE MGP HAS CONTINUOUSLY CONTROLLED THE TERRITORIAL ASSEMBLY SINCE THE 1962 LIBERATION.

7 FOR THE RECORD, WERE GOA TO BECOME A STATE, NAGALAND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE THE SMALLEST STATE IN DEMOGRAPHIC TERMS, BUT GOA WOULD BE THE SMALLEST STATE IN AREA.

COURTNEY UNQUOTE
SCHNEIDER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NEWDE00928
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770022-0742
Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770133/aaaabcon.tel
Line Count: 110
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 67e807d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3548174
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CURRENT GOAN POLITICAL ACTIVITY
TAGS: PINT, IN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/67e807d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009